

# Booking a trip to the shops is taking off as retailers use appointments to manage social distancing and contact tracing

Submitted by: 10to8.com Ltd

Wednesday, 24 June 2020

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EMBARGOED UNTIL: 7:50am 25TH June 2020

No queues and no shopping blues. Booking a trip to the shops is taking off as stores use appointments to manage social distancing and contact tracing.

10to8 appointment scheduling software

([https://10to8.com/?utm\\_source=ResponseSource&utm\\_medium=blog&utm\\_campaign=press-release&utm\\_content=retail](https://10to8.com/?utm_source=ResponseSource&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=press-release&utm_content=retail)) has found that booking a shop visit can solve the COVID social distancing conundrums facing the high street. And it's being done extensively in the US and UK

- Booking visits in advance lets customers shop safely with no queues, planing staff capacity, and a ready-made list of historic bookings for contact tracing if needed.

- 10to8 is giving small shops a helping hand by offering their system free until restrictions are over (they've penciled in 1st October 2020).

- The global appointment scheduling system is used by over 100,000 businesses worldwide, from banks to hairdressers from lawyers to universities. 10to8 is using its insights from around the world to help businesses cope with COVID.

The high street is under immense pressure. Whilst many shops have reopened, consumers are still nervous about going out. In the US, small shops have embraced pre-booked appointments to reassure customers of both safety and the low risks of a queue and the UK has caught on fast too.

For a full analysis of the high street and COVID from 10to8's Insights Team see the full retail report and case studies here

([https://10to8.com/blog/retail-appointments-after-covid/?utm\\_source=ResponseSource&utm\\_medium=blog&utm\\_campaign=p](https://10to8.com/blog/retail-appointments-after-covid/?utm_source=ResponseSource&utm_medium=blog&utm_campaign=p))

10to8 has seen from its data that as lockdown started, many retail bookings moved online, and in-store bookings (like dress fittings, personal shopping etc.) all but disappeared. In the UK, bookings stopped altogether but now shops are seeing a huge demand for booked appointments for store visits.

To help, today, 10to8 is making its booking system available for free until the 1st October 2020 to small independent shops and stores.

The value in booking shop visits; Why are stores doing it?

Scheduling appointments has worked for sectors with limited capacity for years: Think restaurants, hair salons, or your mortgage appointment.

It turns out that booking retail appointments is a great solution to manage social distancing and it comes with a host of other advantages that 10to8's customers have been benefiting from:

- Happy, reassured, and safe customers & staff: By booking slots the space in a shop can be planned in advance to match socially distanced capacity

- No queues: Allowing customers to book online, in advance, means that they can arrive at an allocated slot knowing the store is open and ready for them.

Contact tracing & tracking: If a customer or staff member should get sick it is easier to track who they might have been in touch with if you have a log of who has visited your store.

- Plan staffing: The business can pick the precise staff level for the demand they have on that day.

- Setting hours and availability around the customer: Shops are now planning for a mix of walk-ins and pre-booked appointments, just like restaurants. Some even have lower capacity times to accommodate higher risk customers such as the elderly.

- Understanding customer behaviour: pre-scheduled appointments can give retailers valuable insights.

10to8 is helping retailers reopen safely by providing a bespoke package for free.

“This is a great opportunity for us to help small shops and stores get back on their feet and to help consumers shop with confidence.” - Matthew Cleevely, Founder of 10to8.

To support retailers, 10to8 is offering a Free Retailer Package whilst restrictions for CoVid are in place. Shops were already under pressure before CoVid arrived and 10to8 is keen to do what it can to help these businesses recover. 10to8 is now free for retail businesses with fewer than 10 employees until at least the 1st October 2020.

“The use of bookings on the high street and elsewhere is amazing. Our customers are truly innovative and it’s great to share those innovations with everyone. We’re even seeing museums and art galleries taking bookings to help manage their visitors.” - Richard Hills, MD 10to8.

Contact details:

Matthew Cleevely - Founder, 10to8

matthew.cleevely@10to8.com

Anna Kocsis - Head of Marketing, 10to8

anna.kocsis@10to8.com

07480314104

About 10to8

10to8 is appointment scheduling software that makes bookings happen. Based in Cambridge, UK, it is used by over 100,000 businesses worldwide including health clinics, universities, banks, beauty salons, retail franchises and even alpaca farmers. 10to8’s customers include Expedia, Yale University, Accenture, The Financial Times, and more.

10to8 was developed to rid the world of wasted time. It automatically schedules bookings, gets businesses online and eliminates no-shows through smart communications. We take the wasted time spent managing the average appointment down from 10 minutes of scheduling-hell to 8 seconds of simplicity.

#### About 10to8's Data

The research by the 10to8 team aims to inform and provide learning opportunities from different sectors and countries. 10to8 gathers aggregate and anonymous bookings data from business customers. No private individuals' data is ever used - nor can it be accessed by our analysts. We can never see what appointments are for or any information on the staff or clients who have bookings.